

### **What is a Bioblitz?**

In a BioBlitz, volunteer naturalists, working in teams, have 24 hours to tally as many species of animals and plants as they can on a particular parcel of land. The public goals are several: 1) to demonstrate that biodiversity is important right here at home, not just in distant rain forests; 2) by example to show the public how field biologists and naturalists learn about species and the environment; 3) to encourage communication among people--from scientists to amateur birdwatchers to school kids--who share a curiosity about the environment; and 4) to survey the species on the property for the benefit of the landowner for planning and conservation purposes.

The idea was pioneered by biologists from the National Park Service and from Harvard, including E.O. Wilson. The first BioBlitz was held in Washington, D.C., in 1996. Now BioBlitzes are held all across the United States and around the world. The Rhode Island Natural History Survey (RINHS) organized the first Rhode Island BioBlitz in 2000, in Roger Williams Park in Providence. There, 31 volunteers found 663 species. Considering that the park is almost all mown lawn or eutrophic pond, this was a great demonstration that when it comes to biodiversity, no parcel of land can be written off. Since then, BioBlitz has been held at nature preserves in Middletown and Westerly, at Trustom National Wildlife Refuge in S. Kingstown, at a town forest in Tiverton, a farm in Bristol, and recreation land in Cumberland, among other places. A typical year now draws approximately 275 to 325 participants from throughout the northeast and identifies 900 to 1,100 species. Results and pictures of past BioBlitzes can be seen at [www.rinhs.org/whatwedo/bioblitz](http://www.rinhs.org/whatwedo/bioblitz) or you can watch a short video made at the 2010 BioBlitz on Block Island at [www.youtube.com/rinaturalhistory](http://www.youtube.com/rinaturalhistory).

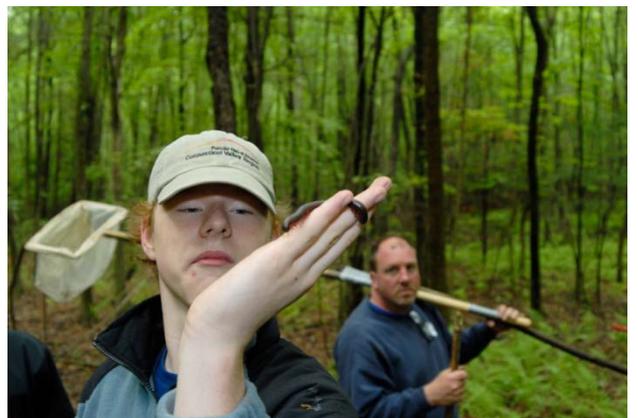
### **What Do We Look For in a Site? What Does the Local Host Do? What Does It Get In Return?**

Rhode Island BioBlitz is ideally held on the first or second Friday and Saturday of June. We investigate possible sites suggested by RINHS members, fans, and the public. We prefer coastal sites but diverse interior sites are also chosen. The ideal site is between 200 and 800 contiguous acres and includes at least field, forest, and aquatic habitat (fresh and hopefully salt water). Overnight camping on-site, power, water, parking, event tents, tables, chairs and catering are required. Every BioBlitz relies on an energetic local host who helps with logistical arrangements and publicity and provides substantial support. A BioBlitz local host typically provides a mix of cash and in-kind support worth \$5-12,000 depending on event needs and, in return, receives a significant biological inventory, good statewide visibility, and opportunities to engage in education and outreach to local and statewide constituencies. RINHS staff are available to the local host before, during, and after the event to meet with donors, give presentations to staff or members, or interpret the event results.

### **About the Rhode Island Natural History Survey (RINHS)**

The RI Natural History Survey is a non-profit organization founded in 1994 to facilitate communication among the many diverse people, agencies, and organizations interested in the ecology of Rhode Island and to gather and disseminate information on Rhode Island's wild animals and plants, geology, and ecosystems. RINHS manages the most comprehensive available database of Rhode Island species and hosts events to highlight biodiversity and the work of researchers and naturalists. It undertakes ecological research and inventory projects with partners including the University of Rhode Island, The Nature Conservancy, and local land trusts. It has a volunteer board of 20 and a full-time staff of five. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in Rhode Island's plants and animals. For more information about RINHS, visit [www.rinhs.org](http://www.rinhs.org).

Images from 2007 (Trustom Pond), 2008 (Grills Preserve), 2009 (Sprague Farm) and 2010 (Block Island)



See more photos at [www.rinhs.org/whatwedo/bioblitz](http://www.rinhs.org/whatwedo/bioblitz)